

MuckRock News
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Baltimore Mayor's Office
PIA Office
250 City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

June 7, 2019

-- To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to the Maryland Public Information Act, I hereby request the following records:

Emails, memos and reports mentioning or describing the May 7th 2019 ransomware attack on the city of Baltimore, when most of Baltimore's government computer systems were infected with a new and aggressive ransomware variant named RobbinHood.

The requested documents will be made available to the general public, and this request is not being made for commercial purposes.

In the event that there are fees, I would be grateful if you would inform me of the total charges in advance of fulfilling my request. I would prefer the request filled electronically, by e-mail attachment if available or CD-ROM if not.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation in this matter. I look forward to receiving your response to this request within 10 calendar days, as the statute requires.

Sincerely,

Emma Best

Filed via MuckRock.com
E-mail (Preferred): 74781-21692210@requests.muckrock.com

I am a member of the news media and request classification as such. I have previously written about the government and its activities, with some reaching over 100,000 readers in outlets such as Gizmodo, MuckRock, Motherboard, Property of the People, AND Magazine, Unicorn Riot, and more. As such, as I have a reasonable expectation of publication and my editorial and writing skills are well established. In addition, I discuss and comment on the files online and make them available through non-profits such as the Library Internet Archive and the Journalist Non-profit, MuckRock, disseminating them to a large audience. While my research is not limited to this, a great deal of it, including this, focuses on the activities and attitudes of the government itself. As such, it is not necessary for me to demonstrate the relevance of this particular subject in advance.

Additionally, case law states that "proof of the ability to disseminate the released information to a broad cross-section of the public is not required." *Judicial Watch, Inc. v. Dep't of Justice*, 365 F.3d 1108, 1126 (D.C. Cir. 2004); see *Carney v. U.S. Dep't of Justice*, 19 F.3d 807, 814-15 (2d Cir. 1994). Further, courts have held that "qualified because it also had 'firm' plans to 'publish a number of . . . 'document sets,'" concerning United States foreign and national security policy." Under this criteria, as well, I qualify as a member of the news media.

Additionally, courts have held that the news media status "focuses on the nature of the requester, not its request. The provision requires that the request be 'made by' a representative of the news media. *Id.* § 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II). A newspaper reporter, for example, is a representative of the news media regardless of how much interest there is in the story for which he or she is requesting information." As such, the details of the request itself are moot for the purposes of determining the appropriate fee category.

As my primary purpose is to inform about government activities by reporting on it and making the raw data available, I request that fees be waived.